

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel in which a pair of substrates are affixed to each other at an outer peripheral region of a display area thereof with a predetermined gap therebetween and liquid crystal is sealed in a cell space formed between the opposing substrates in a region corresponding to said display area, comprising the steps of:

disposing a thermosetting seal material in the outer peripheral region of the display area between said pair of substrates to form a display panel body;

disposing a thermally conductive buffer plate comprising a heat-shrinkable material which is preheated at one or more outer surfaces of said pair of substrates of said display panel body, aligned such that an opening formed in said buffer plate overlaps the display area of said display panel body; and

heating and curing said thermosetting seal material while applying a pressure from said outer surface of said display panel body to between said substrates through said buffer plate.

2. (Original) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 1, wherein

said display panel body includes a plurality of panel regions to be formed into liquid crystal display panels, said thermosetting seal material is disposed in an outer peripheral region of an area to be formed into a display area of each of the panel regions, and

said buffer plate includes an opening formed at a position corresponding to said area of each of said panel regions.

3. (Original) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 1, wherein

at the region of said display panel body where said seal material is disposed, said seal material is heated and cured while a pressure is applied thereto by a pair of heating plates disposed sandwiching said buffer plate disposed at each outer surface of said pair of substrates.

4. (Original) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 3, wherein

a dummy substrate is disposed between at least a lower plate of said pair of heating plates and said buffer plate disposed under said display panel body, and

at least a lower buffer plate, said display panel body, and an upper buffer plate are stacked on said dummy substrate in this order from the bottom in an aligned manner, and are introduced together with said dummy substrate to a space between said pair of heating plates.

5. (Original) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 3, wherein

said display panel body includes a plurality of panel regions to be formed into liquid crystal display panels, and said thermosetting seal material is disposed in each of the panel regions in an outer peripheral region of an area to be formed into a display area, and

said buffer plate includes an opening formed at a position corresponding to said area of each of said panel regions.

6. (Original) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 3, wherein

no spacers for defining the gap between the substrates in said display area are provided in said display panel body.

7. (Original) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 1, wherein

no spacers for defining the gap between the substrates in said display area are provided in said display panel body, and

at the region of said display panel body where said seal material is disposed, said seal material is heated and cured while a pressure is applied thereto by a pair of heating plates disposed sandwiching at least said buffer plate disposed at said one or more outer surfaces of said pair of substrates.

8. (Currently Amended) A buffer plate for applying a pressure to a display panel body in which a thermosetting seal material is disposed in an outer peripheral region of a display area between a pair of substrates, and conducting heat to said thermosetting seal material to cure the seal material, wherein

an opening is formed at a position overlapping an area to be formed into the display area of said display panel body; and

said buffer plate further comprises a rigid film having a high rigidity and buffer films provided to sandwich said rigid film and having a lower rigidity than the rigidity of said rigid film.

9. (Original) The buffer plate according to claim 8, wherein said display panel body includes a plurality of panel regions to be formed into display panels, and said thermosetting seal material is disposed in each of the panel regions in the outer peripheral region of an area to be into a display area, and

an opening is formed at a position overlapping said area to be formed into a display area of each of said panel regions.

10. (Original) The buffer plate according to claim 8, wherein

no spacers for defining a gap between the substrates in said display area are provided in said display panel body.

11. (New) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 1, wherein

the preheating of said buffer plate is performed under conditions substantially identical to the conditions during the heating and curing process applied to said thermosetting seal material.

12. (New) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 1, wherein

no spacers for defining the gap between the substrates in said display area are provided in said display panel body.

13. (New) The buffer plate according to claim 8, wherein said rigid film is formed of a metal.

14. (New) The buffer plate according to claim 8, wherein  
said rigid film is formed of a metal; and  
said buffer film is formed of polytetrafluoroethylene.

15. (New) The buffer plate according to claim 8, wherein said buffer film is formed of polytetrafluoroethylene.

16. (New) A method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel in which a pair of substrates are affixed to each other at an outer peripheral region of a display area thereof with a predetermined gap therebetween and liquid crystal is sealed in a cell space formed between the opposing substrates in a region corresponding to said display area, comprising the steps of:

disposing a thermosetting seal material in the outer peripheral region of the display area between said pair of substrates to form a display panel body;

disposing a thermally conductive buffer plate at one or more outer surfaces of said pair of substrates of said display panel body, aligned such that an opening formed in said buffer plate overlaps the display area of said display panel body, said buffer plate comprising a rigid film having a high rigidity and buffer

films provided to sandwich said rigid film and having a lower rigidity than the rigidity of said rigid film; and

heating and curing said thermosetting seal material while applying a pressure from said outer surface of said display panel body to between said substrates through said buffer plates.

17. (New) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 16, wherein said rigid film is formed of a metal.

18. (New) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 16, wherein

said rigid film is formed of a metal; and

said buffer film is formed of polytetrafluoroethylene.

19. (New) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 16, wherein said buffer film is formed of polytetrafluoroethylene.

20. (New) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 16, wherein

at the region of said display panel body where said seal material is disposed, said seal material is heated and cured while a pressure is applied thereto by a pair of heating plates disposed sandwiching said buffer plate disposed at each outer surface of said pair of substrates.

21. (New) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 16, wherein

a dummy substrate is disposed between at least a lower plate of said pair of heating plates and said buffer plate disposed under said display panel body, and

at least a lower buffer plate, said display panel body, and an upper buffer plate are stacked on said dummy substrate in this order from the bottom in

an aligned manner, and are introduced together with said dummy substrate to a space between said pair of heating plates.

22. (New) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 16, wherein

said display panel body includes a plurality of panel regions to be formed into liquid crystal display panels, and said thermosetting seal material is disposed in each of the panel regions in an outer peripheral region of an area to be formed into a display area, and

said buffer plate includes an opening formed at a position corresponding to said area of each of said panel regions.

23. (New) The method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel according to claim 16, wherein

no spacers for defining the gap between the substrates in said display area are provided in said display panel body.

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